

THISTLEDOWN
OCCASIONAL VERSES



ROLAND
GOODCHILD

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2. Dr J. M. Campbell
with the authors
here, writes

Robert C. Anderson

Man. Apr. 9th '83

Thistledown



Occasional Verses

BY

Roland Goodchild,



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TO I. C.

*By trail and track, and lonely fire,
By mountain, creek and purling stream,
I sought the goal of my desire,
And found—a dream.*

*Till tired and weary with the quest,
I bade the winding road adieu;
I left the realm of wild unrest,
And found—just You.*

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VILLANELLE.

ON A MORNING IN MAY.

The scents of spring are on the air.
And looking from my room I see
Gay birds and flowers are everywhere.

The breeze is like some nectar rare
Which fills my heart with ecstasy,
The scents of spring are on the air.

Was ever country lane so fair?
The blossom's on the apple tree ;
Gay birds and flowers are everywhere.

Gone are the days of dull despair,
Gone, too, is winter's misery,
The scents of spring are on the air,

Dame Nature smiles. And I declare
The violets are on the lea !
Gay birds and flowers are *everywhere*.

Come, leave your study, and prepare
To walk and laugh and sing with me :
The scents of spring are on the air,
Gay birds and flowers are everywhere.

BROWN EYES.

When your brown eyes gaze into mine,
With all the depth of Love Divine,
I lay my heart before the shrine
Of your dear eyes.

And when you smile, well then you seem,
The epitome of Love supreme;
In your dear eyes I catch a gleam
Of Paradise.

Your love is more than gold to me,
And all I want is just to be
With you upon Life's happy sea,
Beneath blue skies!

RONDEAU

To-day I noticed in the street,
 A youth and maiden chance to meet,
 And from my study window high
 What could I do, but heave a sigh?
 He look'd so happy, she so sweet.

And off they went on eager feet,
 To some delightful cool retreat,
 And left me with a pen to ply
 To-day.

But soon I had to grant defeat—
 I couldn't think in dust and heat,
 So when I saw the summer sky
 I dropp'd my pen and let it lie,
 And went and call'd on Marguerite
 To-day.

TWO SONGS OF CANADA.

"SLEIGH SONG."

Gliding we go, over the snow,
The wind rushes by and it's thirty below,
The runners are swinging; the sleigh bells are
 ringing,
Our faces are tingling; our cheeks all a-glow.

Softly we glide; smoothly we ride
Over the prairie, and close side by side
It's grand to be swinging when sleigh-bells are
 ringing
As lustily singing we sweep o'er the wide.

"CANOE SONG."

Paddle softly; paddle smoothly,
The Rapids are near,
On the soft, mellow breezes
 The churning I hear.

Paddle quickly; paddle strongly,
Look out for the weir,
See the foaming and churning,
The Rapids are near!

Down the rapids; past the boulders,
So swiftly and fast,
All's well with the birch bark,
The Rapids are past!

MEMORY'S GARDEN.

'Tis only a faded blossom—
 A flow'r you gave to me,
 But it seems to speak, dear heart, it seems to speak
 Of Thee.

'Tis only a faded rosebud . . .
 But ah! how sweet to me,
 For it takes me back, dear heart, it takes me back
 To the Garden of Memory.

TRIOLET.

I'd kissed her once; I'd kissed her twice,
She murmured: "Sir, will you desist!"
And when I tried to kiss her thrice . . .
I'd kissed her once; I'd kissed her twice . . .
She said sedately: "'Twill suffice."
But I was aye an optimist.
I'd kissed her once; I'd kissed her twice,
She murmured: "Sir, will you desist."

ON MEMORY'S WING.

On memory's wing come thoughts of thee,
And of that glorious day in spring.
Alas! they only come to me
On memory's wing.

Those days when we were queen and king;
Those days beneath the cedar tree,
When Cupid pushed the hammock swing.

~~~~~

Just for to-day I seem to be  
Beneath the cedar, listening . . .  
Alas! that thoughts of love should flee  
On memory's wing.

## PLATONIC FRIENDSHIP.

We were just pals and roamed about together,  
And talked of Art and Life like good pals will;  
Enjoyed the distant view, and plucked the heather  
That grew in wild profusion on the hill.  
We scorned such silly things as Love and Passion:  
"We'll just be two good friends," so she had said,  
And I had acquiesced, Platonic fashion,  
And quoted from a book that I had read.

So things went on, until, one summer morning,  
When all the world lay sleeping 'neath the sun;  
And as we sat I felt a "something" dawning:  
The blood within my veins so madly run.  
I turned, and saw my friend, a friend no longer,  
The Light of Love shone from her sapphire eyes,  
And then I knew that Love had proven stronger,  
Than Plato's teaching or mere friendship's ties.

## TRIOLET.

She has eyes like two bright sapphires,  
Gleaming on a field of snow.  
I could use up quires and quires—  
She has eyes like two bright sapphires—  
And a glance from them inspires  
Me to write a folio.  
She has eyes like two bright sapphires,  
Gleaming on a field of snow,

## WHITSTABLE.

Winding roads and crazy houses,  
Nestling by the sea,  
With your air of homely comfort,  
You've become a part of me.  
How I love the view you offer  
From the hill across the lea,  
Winding roads and crazy houses,  
Nestling by the sea !

I can never lose the memory  
That about you clings,  
Tho' the past has swept between us,  
Many summers ; many springs.  
For you always wake within me,  
Thoughts that crowd on memory's wings—  
I can never lose the memory  
That about you clings.

LAMENT.

How can I tell you what I long to say?  
 How can I hope that you will sympathise?  
 You, who have stolen all my thoughts away,  
 Brown Eyes.

How can I dare to think—to dream of you?  
 How can I hope to long for such a prize?  
 The Love and Sympathy that peeps from two  
 Brown Eyes?

No, I must worship from a distant plane,  
 And clothe my burning passion in disguise;  
 Hiding the rapture that has caused me pain . . .  
 The light of two Brown Eyes.

## WHAT CAN I SAY?

What can I say to Marguerite?  
The question fills me with dismay—  
See, here she comes along the street . . .  
What can I say?

I know she'll want a *matinée*  
And tea and pastry, too, to eat . . .  
I hav'nt got the coin to pay!

She's coming nearer . . . soon we'll meet;  
My empty pockets I survey . . .  
With apprehension, I repeat  
What *can* I say?



"IN THE SPRING."

(THREE TRIOLETS.)

What else could I do?  
 But give her a wink?  
 I put it to you  
 What else could I do?  
 Her eyes were so blue  
 And her cheeks were so pink,  
 What else could I do  
 But give her a wink?

She just hung her head—  
 Such a *shy* little maid!  
 'Cause her cheeks were so red  
 She just hung her head,  
 When I kiss'd her and said:  
 "What makes you afraid?"  
 She just hung her head—  
*Such* a shy little maid.

Cupid came to my aid  
 In the sweet summer weather  
 With his arrows display'd,  
 Cupid came to my aid,  
 And there in the shade  
 We wander'd together.  
 Cupid came to my aid,  
 In the sweet summer weather.

## THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH.

There is a land . . . a sun lit land,  
Where gum trees rear their spreading boughs  
And whisper gently, being fanned,  
By every wind that sighs and soughs.  
Where gentle rivers, cool and calm  
Meander thro' the silent Bush,  
Past station house and humble farm,  
Past tumbled rocks and waving rush.  
The parrakeets, with piercing cry  
Flash by, like brilliant coloured gems;  
The platapus, so sleek and sly  
Swims in and out the bullrush stems;  
The dingo howls his note of woe,  
And prowls his silent Bush domain.  
High overhead, sedate and slow  
There flies a long neck'd, stately crane.

A bushy 'possum, button eye'd  
From yonder dead and ghostly tree,  
Peeps out, and views the Bushland wide,  
As does a sailor sweep the sea,  
Bright butterflies, like coloured leaves,  
Drift to and fro, from flower to flower;  
The cunning spider deftly weaves  
His treacherous web from hour to hour.  
The hum of insects fill the air,  
And bees buzz by on heavy wing,  
From fragrant bushes, sweet and fair,  
Where tiny buds are floweri g.

Close by, upon a mossy glade  
The rabbits scamper to and fro;  
Or, sleeping, crouch beneath the shade  
Where bullock grass and bushes grow.  
A drowsy stillness holds the land,  
It dozes in the noonday heat,  
So full of charm, so fair, so grand,  
So all-too-wonderfully sweet.

## IN A GREY MOOD.

What is Life, but a smile . . . a sigh  
A span of days, then a long "good-bye."  
    Roses and thorns,  
    Laughter and tears,  
A moment of joy, and regret of years.  
Ambition to rise and a bitter fall,  
Till we answer the note of the last, long call.

Why were we brought to this world of pain?  
What is the reason, and what the gain?  
    Our petty joys,  
    Our vain regrets,  
Burn away, like our cigarettes.  
And what is Life but a smile . . . a sigh  
A span of days, then a long "good-bye"?

## ANOTHER CONCEPTION OF LIFE.

What is Life? Not the frenzied existence for pelf,  
The grasping and grubbing for riches, position or  
fame;

But the solace of helping another; of giving oneself;  
Assisting the needy; of aiding the halt and the  
lame.

That is the task we were sent to the world to perform:—

Giving and loving; helping the stricken to see  
The deep sapphire skies that are hidden behind the  
storm:—

The Islands of Rest, in the Ocean of Sympathy.

RONDLETS.

Kiss me again,  
 With those red lips so warm.  
 Kiss me again,  
 Those lips were made for love 'tis plain,  
 And what's a kiss? There is no harm,  
 No cause for terror or alarm,  
 Kiss me again.

Again! Again!  
 Sing me a soundless psalm,  
 Again. . . . Again.  
 Nay, do not ask me to refrain,  
 Or to be serious or calm,  
 Come, nestle close within my arm,  
 Again! Again!

## TRIOLET.

"A letter from a friend,"  
And what's *he* got to say?  
I wonder who has penned  
"A letter to a friend,"  
"I say, old chappy, lend  
A half a dollar." Eh?—  
A letter from a friend,  
And *what's* he got to say?

"A FAREWELL."

Just one last, lingering kiss  
                     Before I go away—  
 Nay, do not gaze at me like that . . . .  
                     Bid me not stay.

We two were born too late,  
                     And I must go away.  
 So just one kiss . . . . one lingering . . . .  
                     Bid me not stay.

"GONE."

She's gone,  
 And I am so desolate.  
 If all the stars, save one in yonder sky  
 Had disappeared,  
 That one, lone, solitary star,  
 Gazing with infinite sorrow on the earth,  
 Would not be half so lonely as am I  
 Viewing the dreary vista of my life  
 Without her.  
 For now she's gone  
 I am so desolate.

## VILLANELLE.

I have but love to offer thee,  
And here I lay it at thy feet—  
I crave thy tender sympathy.

'Tis thus I urge my passion'd plea,  
By whispering this poor conceit :  
"I have but love to offer thee."

I offer this, my treasury.  
To make my happy life complete  
I crave thy tender sympathy.

I was not born of high degree,  
Take my poor riches, I entreat :  
I have but love to offer thee.

O lady, for this melody  
Sung from a poet's poor retreat,  
I crave thy tender sympathy.

It fills my heart with ecstacy.  
With rapture is my heart replete.  
I have but love to offer thee,  
I crave thy tender sympathy.



## RONDEAU.

I met a lass with eyes of blue,  
Which match'd the harebells' tender hue,  
And as the spring was in the air—  
Gay birds and flowers were everywhere—  
A timid longing grew and grew.

I had no other thing to do,  
So down that country avenue  
I wander'd quite content, and there  
I met a lass.

And boldly picking up my cue,  
I raised my hat, and said "How do,"  
She toss'd her golden head of hair,  
She gave me such a glassy stare,  
That I admit, my Waterloo  
I met, alas!

## TRIOLET.

When Fancy nods her head at me,  
I drop the garb of earth behind.  
And up I rise, delighted, free,  
When Fancy nods her head at me.  
For to be in her coterie  
Is honour not to be declined.  
When Fancy nods her head at me,  
I drop the garb of earth behind.

CUPID'S VISIT.

(A ROUNDEL).

Love came to me one summer day,  
 And fill'd my heart with ecstasy—  
 Last year I had no chance to say  
                     Love came to me.

But now no longer on the lea  
 With lonely thoughts and sad, I stray—  
 A maiden bears me company.

I chanced on her a-making hay;  
 She raised her eyes so prettily  
 That, then and there, without delay,  
                     Love came to me.

## "COMME IL FAUT."

I stole a kiss—'twas wrong, I know,  
But we were sitting on a seat;  
Perhaps it wasn't *comme il faut*,  
But she was really awfully sweet,  
And we were sitting on a seat.

The moon was hid behind a cloud,  
And as we two were very shy,  
We thanked our stars for such a shroud  
To do our timid courting by.  
(We two were both so very shy.)

Ah, me, 'twas many years ago  
Since we were sitting on that seat,  
And now it's counted *comme il faut*—  
I kiss her every time we meet.  
(For it was many years ago,  
Since we were sitting on that seat).

## TRIOLET.

Elsie smoked a cigarette  
Naughty little maid!  
Now she's learnt to know regret,  
(Elsie smoked a cigarette)  
And her mien I can't forget  
When her looks convey'd,  
"Elsie smoked a cigarette,"—  
Naughty little maid!

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Do you remember how I took your hand,  
 That day in sweet September?  
 And wandered, smiling, thro' a sun-swept land,  
 Do you remember?

Do you remember how we laughed and sang,  
 Clasped hand in hand together?  
 The woods re-echoed and the forests rang,  
 Ah! that was smiling weather!

Do you remember how we said "good-bye"  
 That day in bleak December?  
 A close embrace . . . a lingering kiss . . . a sigh,  
 Do you remember?

Do you remember how the sky was black,  
 The snow was on the heather?  
 My heart was sad, and I was looking back . . .  
 Ah! that was bitter weather!

## TRIOLET.

Her lips were so red,  
So I make no excuse.  
For as I have said,  
Her lips were so red,  
I quite lost my head,  
Shall I tell? What's the use?  
Her lips were so red,  
So I make no excuse.

A MESSAGE.

On Memory's wing come thoughts of you,  
 Sweet thoughts which cheer my way;  
 And tho' the seas divide us, Love,  
 My heart's with you to-day.

Across the seas that separate  
 You from my fond embrace,  
 I seem to see a vision fair . . . .  
 Your radiant, smiling face.

On winds that sweep from East to West  
 I send a thought Divine:  
 Pray God, that as I keep your Love,  
 You too, will treasure mine.

TRIOLET  
AT "A MUSICAL EVENING."

Irene, to-night,  
    You're remarkably pretty.  
I'm fill'd with delight,  
Irene, to-night,  
As I watch you recite  
    Something charmingly witty.  
Irene, to-night,  
    You're remarkably pretty.



LOVE BADE ME SING.

Love bade me sing. Could I refuse  
 That dainty little god-like king?  
 Go, Pegasus, and tell the Muse  
 Love bade me sing.

On to my Pegasus I swing,  
 No priceless moment must I lose,  
 Thoughts come and go on fleeting wing.

With willing feet my steed pursues  
 The rosy dawn of coming spring,  
 I have no time to pick or choose—  
 Love bade me sing.

TRIOLET.

In the spring of the year  
 Cupid's clever at shooting.  
 When he starts his career  
 In the spring of the year  
 His arrow he'll steer  
 To the West End—or Tooting.  
 In the spring of the year  
 Cupid's clever at shooting.

## VILLANELLE.

## ON A SPRING MORNING.

"Wake up ! wake up !" the thrushes say,  
The east assumes a rosy hue,  
The veils of night are thrust away.

Upon the paths the sunbeams play,  
What's that I hear ?—"Cuckoo ! cuckoo !"  
"Wake up ! wake up !" the thrushes say.

The sun god rises bright and gay,  
And starts to climb the skies of blue.  
The veils of night are thrust away.

And there in spick and span array,  
Surrounded by the glistening dew,  
"Wake up ! wake up !" the thrushes say,

Sweet scents are wafted from the May,  
And darkness bids the world adieu,  
The veils of night are thrust away.

Sweet scents are wafted from the May,  
Between the trees the sun shines o'.  
"Wake up ! wake up !" the thrushes say,  
The veils of night are thrust away.

TO SOMEBODY I KNOW.

(A RONDEAU.)

Within your eyes I see to-night,  
 A sweet, coquettish little sprite,  
 Mischievous, and full of fun,  
 Who quite defies comparison.  
 One moment he will look so bright,  
 The next he seems to take affright  
 And flies completely out of sight,  
 Leaving the sport he has begun  
 Within your eyes.

The little rascal takes delight  
 In making humble and contrite.  
 And if, perchance, beneath the sun  
 That shines above, there's anyone  
 Who doubts, I'll point them out the light  
 Within your eyes.

## ON RECEIVING A PORTRAIT.

Two eyes that gaze at me, a face that smiles,  
Two lips, in shape, like Cupid's golden bow,  
It gives me courage o'er the weary miles,  
The memory of a kiss, so long ago.

It brings me hope for happy days with you;  
The sky, once overcast with grey and black,  
Assumes a shade of brightest sapphire blue,  
My Desert Trail is now a woodland track.

Ah me! how sweet, how sweet it is to love,  
And dream of days when we shall part no more,  
When safe in Homeland, with the sun above,  
Together we will face what lies before.

## ALLAH-I-BACKSHEESH.

God made a body full of grace,  
Endowed it with a love so true,  
Gave it a pure and lovely face,  
Blessed it . . . and called it, You.

God gave you eyes like summer skies,  
Of deep, unfathomable blue,  
So full of mystery, so wise,  
So tender and so true.

Oh, pure sweet face, Oh, dear blue eyes,  
The very thought of you uplifts,  
Grant me the love that never dies . . .  
The greatest of God's gifts.

VILLANELLE.

On a hot day in June.

O for a breath of the sea,  
In a cool and delightful retreat—  
Instead—just the study—Ah me!

Its close in the dull library,  
And its dusty outside in the street,  
O! for a breath of the sea!

I long to be careless and free  
With the water caressing my feet,  
Instead—just the study—Ah me!

The temperature's just ninety-three  
According to M. Fahrenheit,  
O for a breath of the sea!

I'd like to be out on the spree  
With Dot or her friend Marguerite,  
Instead—just the study—Ah me!

With a sigh, full of deep misery  
I turn to my desk and repeat:  
"O for a breath of the sea  
Instead—just the study—Ah me!"

## HIS HEART'S DESIRE.

(A ROUNDEL).

My heart's desire? It is not gold,  
No wealth of riches I require;  
But if I tell, you may withhold  
My heart's desire.

Well, ask your brother to retire—  
Thank Heaven he isn't very old;  
Turn out the light; poke up the fire.

I wonder will you think me bold?  
I'll risk the raising of your ire.  
(He kisses her), Sweetheart, behold  
—My heart's desire!

A MEMORY.

Each little moment spent with you,  
 I treasure in my memory;  
 I sometimes wonder if you knew  
 'Twas all you left with me.

Each tender smile; each gentle glance,  
 Remain within my memory.  
 The lost ideal of Youth's romance  
 Was all you left with me.

## VILLANELLE.

O will she listen to my plea?  
That little maid with eyes of blue—  
Perhaps she doesn't care for me.

See! there she trips so daintily  
Across the shady avenue,  
O will she listen to my plea?

Perchance some trick of destiny  
Will rob me of an interview—  
Perhaps she doesn't care for me.

Ah, there she is beneath the tree;  
Her friend is bidding her adieu . . .  
O will she listen to my plea?

'Tis possible her modesty  
Will make her shy. I wish I knew,  
Perhaps she doesn't care for me.

Ah well, I'll hope for victory,  
Now is the time for me to woo.  
O will she listen to my plea?  
Perhaps she doesn't care for me.



THE LONELY PRAYER.

Oh Love Divine, consummate in thy power,  
 Grant me thy joy, before you flee away,  
 Be with me constantly from hour to hour,  
 Walk by my side, and let me taste, I pray.

Let me but taste a few short hours with thee,  
 Lock'd in thine arms, and pressing heart to heart;  
 Grant me thy joy, before 'tis time for me  
 To say "goodbye" to all and to depart.

Kiss me but once, with sweet caress and long,  
 Ere yet my day is o'er and shadows fall,  
 Look in my eyes and sing a lover's song,  
 Before I hear the last and longest call.

## WE KISS'D.

We kiss'd and had no word to say,  
All thoughts of speaking I dismiss'd,  
And when I knew I could not stay—  
We kiss'd.

My eyes were blurr'd as with a mist,  
There was not even time to pray . . .  
I simply clasped her dainty wrist.

I could not chance a short delay—  
That wretched train I nearly missed,  
But, ere the guard thrust her away  
We kiss'd!

OH, FOR A SIGHT OF YOUR EYES.

Oh, for a sight of your eyes,  
 Oh, for the sound of your voice,  
 Ringing across the night,  
 Bidding me smile and rejoice.

Oh, for the touch of your lips,  
 Oh, for the beat of your heart,  
 Throbbing and pulsing with mine,  
 Bidding me never depart.

• • •

Instead, just the breath of the wind,  
 Moaning between the trees,  
 And a heart that is aching with love . . .  
 Roaming the Seven Seas.

## MEMORIES.

I know a place that is filled with sad memories,  
Mem'ries of Youth, when we loved deep and true.  
I know a place that is filled with sad mem'ries,  
Mem'ries of Passion; mem'ries of You.

I know a heart that is beating in sadness,  
I know two eyes that were sapphire in hue,  
I know a heart that is sad with the mem'ries,  
Mem'ries of Passion; mem'ries of You.

WANDERER'S FAITH.

A silver star in the magic sky ;  
 The song of a bird as you homeward plod :  
 Better than all the creeds, say I,  
 Is a silver star in the magic sky—  
 A Message of Peace from God.

The moon a gleam on a rippling sea ;  
 A gentle breeze as it breathes a prayer :  
 Better than all the creeds to me,  
 Is the moon a gleam on a rippling sea—  
 Peaceful—and oh ! so fair.

Sun and moon and the world around ;  
 Birds and flow'rs and the open sky ;  
 'Twas there that the peace of God I found,  
 For the sun and moon and the world around  
 Are better than all the creeds, say I.

## YOUR EYES.

Your eyes are like the summer skies . . .  
Skies of deepest blue;  
And when you smile, dear heart, I see  
Heav'n shining thro'.

All that makes the world seem gay . . .  
All I see in you,  
Burning with a Heav'nly flame,  
Eyes of deepest blue.

ROUNDEL.

If dreams came true to me? Ah, well,  
 I think I know what I would do :  
 By some sweet countryside I'd dwell,  
 If dreams came true.

Beneath the summer skies of blue,  
 Reclining in some woodland dell,  
 The timid Muse I would pursue.

Maybe some pretty country belle  
 With eyes of deepest sapphire hue,  
 Would smile on me. Ah, who can tell?  
 If dreams came true.

## TRIOLET.

(To a Japanese Fan).

Little maid of Old Japan,  
See! I kiss your pretty face.  
What a shame you're on a fan,  
Little maid of Old Japan,  
With that ugly Chinaman . . .  
Ere I put you in your case,  
Little maid of Old Japan,  
See! I kiss your pretty face.



VILLANELLE.

ON A SUMMER EVENING.

The western sky is tinged with red,  
And evening whispers seem to say :  
The joyous sun has almost sped.

Pale stars are twinkling overhead ;  
Cool winds between the branches play,  
The western sky is tinged with red.

Night rises, and with arms outspread  
Usurps the sceptre of the day ;  
The joyous sun has almost sped.

The merry birds have gone to bed ;  
Tranquillity and peace hold sway ;  
The western sky is tinged with red.

Late songsters to their nests have fled,  
And stars come out in bright array,  
The joyous sun has almost sped.

An unseen hand has pluck'd the thread  
That bound the sun's remaining ray,  
The western sky is tinged with red ;  
The joyous sun has almost sped.

## CHEER

When you feel that the world is ungrateful,  
And everyone harsh and unkind.  
When your task seems a hard one, and hateful,  
If you just raise a smile, you will find,  
That the clouds fly away to the skyline,  
That your work seems a kind of a game.  
I've tried it, and found it a gold mine—  
You try it, you'll find it the same.

